



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MDMR and MDEQ Reopen All Mississippi Territorial Waters to Commercial and Recreational Blue Crab Fishing

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), in coordination with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), have ordered the **reopening of all Mississippi territorial waters, including those south of the barrier islands, to all commercial and recreational blue crab fishing activities** that were part of the precautionary oil spill closures. This order takes effect at 12:01 p.m. today. **All commercial and recreational oyster fishing will remain closed in the affected areas; sample results are pending.**

The reopening is being implemented after the completion of extensive sampling and testing conducted by the MDMR, MDEQ, NOAA and FDA. The FDA has advised that, following extensive sensory testing and chemical analysis, tissue samples tested indicate that crabs from these previously closed areas south of the barrier islands are safe for consumption. Testing for crab tissues includes specimens of special interest, such as those with dark gills, brought to DMR's attention by concerned fishermen and the public; all of these samples have been determined to be safe for consumption as well.

All other regulations specific to each particular fishery will remain in full force and effect.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at www.dmr.ms.gov.

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality safeguards the health, safety, and welfare of Mississippians by conserving and improving our environment and wise economic growth through focused research and responsible regulation.

Map shows areas of Mississippi territorial waters that reopen at 12:01 p.m. Aug. 21 to blue crab fishing activities. Waters north of the barrier islands were reopened Aug. 20 to those activities.

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